

RECOMMENDED PHYSICAL STANDARDS FOR MEAT AND POULTRY SLAUGHTER AND PROCESSING PLANTS

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I. OUTSIDE PREMISES

Location of a plant and the sanitation of its outside premises can have a significant effect on the sanitation inside the plant. Meat, as it is handled in the plant, may become exposed to the outside elements through loading docks, doorways, open windows and the passage of workers and visitors in and out of, the plant.

Sanitary maintenance of the outside premises is best handled on a long-range continuing program. Suitable containers or facilities must be provided for routine accumulations of scrap materials and discarded equipment items. An appropriate routine removal of the useless material is essential.

Storage of useful materials and equipment should be stored in an orderly manner on elevated racks at least 12 inches high. This facilitates the necessary routine cleanup of waste and debris from all ground surfaces. Plant management must instruct maintenance and repair personnel to promptly and properly store useful items in the provided facilities and not permit the utilization of temporary accumulation points. These “temporary” storage areas have a way of growing and becoming permanent.

II. PLANT CONSTRUCTION

Floors, walls, and ceilings in the plant should be constructed to be easy to clean and should be kept clean and in good repair. Fixtures, ducts and pipes should not be suspended over working areas where drip or condensate may contaminate foods, raw materials, label and packaging materials or equipment.

Floors

Floors should be constructed of:

- A. Vitrified brick of good quality, bonded with acid-resistant waterproof mortar, and laid on a waterproof concrete base.
- B. Dense, acid-resistant waterproof concrete, or
- C. Other approved impervious material.

Interior Walls

Interior walls should be smooth, flat and constructed of impervious materials such as glazed brick, glazed tile, smooth-surfaced portland cement plaster or other nontoxic,

nonabsorbent material applied to a suitable base. Glass blocks used in wall panels must have smooth exposed surfaces, and be installed so as to prevent breakage by equipment or carcasses. Suitable sanitary type bumpers should be provided on walls to prevent damage by hand trucks, carcass shanks, and the like. Junction of floor and wall should be coved to facilitate cleaning.

Doorways and Doors

If frequently contacted by product, doors and doorjambs should be clad with rust resistant metal with tightly soldered or welded seams. The juncture of the doorjambs and the walls should be effectively sealed with a flexible sealing compound.

Ceilings

Ceilings can be an important source of direct product contamination. They should be constructed of smooth non-absorbent material. Therefore, they must be maintained free of scaling paint or plaster, dust, condensate and leaks at all times. If possible, it is best to avoid painting ceiling surfaces.

Interior Woodwork

In those situations where the use of exposed interior woodwork is unavoidable, finished lumber should be used. The exposed wood surface should be painted with either good grade nontoxic oil or plastic base paint, or treated with hot linseed oil or a clear wood sealer. The latter two treatments are preferred, particularly on ceiling areas.

III. PLANT LIGHTING

Adequate light is essential to maintain good sanitation. Effective clean-up procedures, acceptable sanitary dressing of carcasses, as well as sanitary practices in all areas of the plant, are extremely unlikely unless abundant light is available. Contaminants cannot be easily removed if they cannot be seen. Adequate lighting must be provided to all areas where food or food ingredients are processed, examined or stored; where equipment and utensils are washed; and to hand washing areas, dressing and locker rooms, and toilet rooms. Light bulbs, fixtures, skylights, or other glass suspended over food in any stage of preparation should be of the safety type or otherwise protected to prevent food contaminations in case of breakage. This can be accomplished by providing a protective shield of suitable non-shattering material such as Plexiglas. The overall intensity of artificial illumination in workrooms should not be less than 20 foot-candles. The illumination should be not less than 50 foot-candles at all places where inspections are made or where special illumination is required to enable establishment employees to properly prepare products of any character to meet the requirements of inspection. In carcass coolers 10 foot-candles illumination at the front shank level is sufficient.

IV. PLANT REFRIGERATION

Adequate refrigeration is one of the most important means of controlling the growth of microorganisms. It is imperative that sufficient refrigerated space be provided to properly handle carcasses and product.

All perishable products should be stored in areas with a maximum temperature of 37° F. Ideally the temperature of processing rooms should not exceed 50° F. In those situations where the temperature requirements would be difficult or impossible to obtain, work surfaces must be cleaned every 4 hours during operation.

Each type of refrigeration must be properly installed. If wall coils are used, a drip gutter of concrete or other impervious material united with the floor and properly connected with the drainage system should be provided beneath the coils. If overhead refrigerating facilities are installed, insulated drip pans properly connected to the drainage system shall be placed beneath them.

Floor-type refrigerating units must be placed within curbed and separately drained areas unless located adjacent to floor drains.

The old-style overhead brine spray refrigerating units must be properly maintained so as to prevent dripping or otherwise contaminating carcasses or product.

V. PLANT WATER SUPPLY

Potable Water

An adequate supply of fresh clean water is of primary importance in sanitation programs and plant operations. The first requirement is that the water supply in the plant be "potable." This simply means drinkable or safe for human consumption without further treatment such as boiling or adding chemicals.

As a minimum, the plant water supply must pass the tests prescribed for potability in the "Drinking Water Standards" promulgated by the Public Health Service of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Water from any source not approved and certified as potable is automatically deemed non-potable.

Since frequent testing is required of water in an approved public water supply, it can usually be accepted into the plant as potable. The chief concern in this case is the possibility of pollution within the plant. Therefore, the certification samples should be taken at least once a year at various points of distribution in the plant. A single sample

taken at the meter is of little or no value, as it does not indicate the quality of the water actually included in or used on product.

VI. PLANT WASTE DISPOSAL

Sewage Disposal

The sewage disposal facilities utilized by the plant must be acceptable to the local authorities having jurisdiction over such matters in the area. A letter from the proper authority is to be on file with the Inspector-in-Charge for each plant under inspection.

Rubbish Removal

Rubbish such as used paper towels, cartons, office waste, labeling materials, etc., frequently can be a sanitation problem. Suitable containers conveniently located throughout the plant must be provided and emptied frequently.

The accumulation of rubbish prior to its removal or incineration must not cause a nuisance. (Refer to section on Outside Premises for a more detailed discussion.)

VII. EQUIPMENT

Equipment used in meat handling and processing ranges all the way from the most simple hand tools to large, highly complex, electronically operated machinery. Since there is extensive contact of product with equipment surfaces, this is where potential hazards to product safety and cleanliness lie.

Therefore, equipment must be constructed and maintained so that it can be easily kept clean. All surfaces contacting product must be free of scale; should be smooth, nonporous; and should be free from pits, crevices, seams, or joints, in which food may lodge, decompose and support the growth of organisms.

Acceptable Materials

With few exceptions, equipment must be constructed either of rust resisting metal, such as 18-8 (300 series) stainless steel, or of approved plastic or fiberglass. Galvanized metal, although acceptable in certain equipment, is not desirable because it is not adequately resistant to the corrosive action of food products and cleaning compounds and has short life. When used, galvanized metal must have the smoothness of high quality commercial hot dip.

Non-acceptable Materials

There are many materials that are highly undesirable or totally unacceptable for use in equipment construction. The following is a partial listing:

Cadmium and antimony are toxic compounds and are not acceptable in any manner or form in equipment used for handling edible product.

Also, due to its toxic nature, lead must not be used in equipment contacting edible product, except that it may be employed in dairy solder in an amount not to exceed 5 percent. Lead babbitt, frequently employed in head splitting equipment, is not acceptable. Nylon or other approved plastics make suitable substitutes.

Due to the high risk of chipping, the use of containers or equipment made of enamelware or porcelain is not acceptable for any purpose in connection with the handling and processing of exposed product.

Painted surfaces are not permanent and may readily contaminate the food. Therefore, paint is not acceptable on any equipment area that may contact product.

Wood is not a satisfactory material for equipment construction since it does not maintain a smooth surface and is not impervious. Wood used in any manner resulting in product contact is strongly discouraged. It is permitted only in those situations where strict sanitary standards are practical and can be rigidly enforced.

Leather and fabrics due to their porous nature, are not acceptable materials for equipment construction. Filter cloths used in rendered fat filter presses are permitted, provided they are clean and freshly laundered.

Dissimilar metals should not be used in equipment construction as their contact with liquid or other products may create harmful chemical and electrolytic action.

VIII. EQUIPMENT DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

Sanitary design principles apply to all types of equipment used in the slaughter of livestock and the handling and processing of product. The primary objective of sanitary design is to facilitate keeping equipment clean, thereby controlling and preferably eliminating product contamination. The continuing push for greater and greater production generally tends to increase the contamination hazards and sometimes seriously curtails the time available for cleanup. Sound sanitary design of both the plant and equipment then becomes even more essential.

In order to encourage the thorough cleaning of equipment, the time and the ease of disassembly are important considerations. Equipment should be as simple in construction as possible and contain the fewest number of parts practical to permit easy dismantling and reassembly following cleaning. The design, construction, and installation should be such that permits easy access for sanitary, as well as mechanical, maintenance. When discussing the equipment used in slaughter and processing plants, there are two separate areas of the equipment to consider, the product contact zones of the equipment, and the non-product contact areas.

Product Contact Zone

Accessibility for Cleaning

All parts of the product zone must be readily accessible to sight and reach for cleaning and inspection. In large equipment, appropriately located clean out and inspection openings, catwalks, ladders or other suitable provisions must be made to insure that all parts can be cleaned and inspected. It is the plant management's responsibility to demonstrate compliance with this requirement.

Gaskets and Packings

All gasketing and packing materials must be nontoxic, nonporous, non absorbent, and unaffected by food products and cleaning compounds. Such materials should be installed in a true fit to prevent protrusion of the materials into the product zone or the creation of recesses or ledges at the gasketed joints.

Seals and Bearings

All bearings must be located outside the product zone. If it is adjacent to it, it must be constructed with a seal at the entrance of the shaft into the product zone. Sufficient space must be provided to permit the easy removal of the seal assembly for easy cleaning and inspection. Seals and bearings must be installed and maintained so as to prevent lubricant leakage or entrance of product into the assembly.

Interior Corners

Interior corners of equipment must be provided with radii (1/4 inch minimum), except where greater radii are required for easy drainage and cleaning.

Welded Joints

All welding within the product zone must be continuous, smooth, even, and relatively flush with the adjacent surfaces.

Freedom from Cracks, Recesses, Ledges, and the like

All parts of the product zone must be free of recesses, open seams and gaps, crevices, protruding ledges, inside threads, inside shoulders, inside bolts or rivets, and dead ends.

Self-Draining Equipment

Where necessary for sanitary maintenance, equipment must be constructed and installed so as to be completely self-draining.

Screening, Straining and Filtering Surfaces

All screening straining and filtering surfaces shall be readily removable for cleaning and inspection. Screening and straining devices should be designed to prevent replacement in an improper position. Permanent screening and straining surfaces should be fabricated from perforated metal.

On dry granular or dry pulverized product, wire screen of not less than 30 x 30 continuous mesh may be used.

Filter papers must be of the single-service type. Filter cloths or spun glass filters shall be launderable.

Conveyor Belts

All belts used to convey exposed product must be of sanitary grade, moisture-resistant, nonabsorbent material with no exposed fabric core. Conveyor guides, splash guards, etc., should be easily removed or of open construction to permit cleaning.

Lubricants

Equipment in which lubricating grease or oil is used should be designed to prevent the contamination of product by lubricating material. As a further precaution against the inclusion of toxic compounds in product, all lubricants used in areas where potential contamination exists must be edible and specifically approved.

If the possibility of contamination of products by lubricants exists, the establishment should be required to take suitable corrective measures without delay. A particular concern is the contamination potential of lubricants used in overhead motors, gears, and similar devices. If drip pans are necessary to provide protection, they should be easily accessible for inspection and removable for cleaning.

Non-Product Zone

Parts of equipment outside the immediate product zone are also important due to the hazards of indirect and/or accidental contamination of product. In many cases, workers handle product and equipment alternately, which increases the contamination potential. Therefore, many of the principles of design and construction illustrated in the product zone apply here as well:

All external surfaces must be free of open seams, gaps, crevices, and inaccessible recesses.

Horizontal ledges or frame members must be kept to a minimum.

All external parts should be of round or tubular material where possible to avoid accumulation of debris and to permit easy cleaning.

All safety or gear guards must be readily removable for cleaning and inspection. Components that may not be cleaned (motors, electrical gear, etc.) must be sealed against entrance of product and water.

IX. EQUIPMENT INSTALLATION

Certain requirements on the placement, arrangement and installation of equipment have been established to permit convenient, positive cleaning. Constant attention must be given to these details in order to maintain an orderly flow and clean handling of product. The initial installation of equipment and every change in operations must be carefully analyzed for potential sanitation problems. Any circumstance that could result in product contamination should be avoided.

All equipment must be constructed so it can be easily kept clean. It should be free of cracks and crevices and put together so it can be taken apart as necessary for thorough cleaning. All surfaces which meat or juices may contact should be able to be made open for inspection.

Spacing from Walls, Ceiling, and Floor

All permanently mounted or not readily movable equipment must either be installed sufficiently above the floor and away from wall and ceiling areas to provide access for cleaning and inspection, or be completely sealed (watertight) in these areas. Whenever equipment, chutes, or pipelines pass through walls, they should either be sealed to them, or sufficient clearance should be allowed to permit inspection, cleaning and maintenance. Where pipes pass through ceilings of exposed product areas, pipe

sleeves should be inserted in the floor above so that their upper periphery is at least 2 inches above the floor.

Wall-Mounted Facilities

Wall-mounted cabinets and electrical connections (such as switch boxes, electrical panels, and BX cables) must be either installed at least 1 inch from equipment or walls, or be completely sealed (watertight) to the equipment or walls.

Water Connections and Control of Waste Water

Where possible, water inlets must discharge above the highest level reached by liquids in the equipment. Those installations requiring submerged water lines must be equipped with a functional vacuum breaker.

Drains should be of adequate size to permit rapid draining without spillage and should be at the lowest point with no inside collar or projection.

All equipment handling wastewater must be installed so the wastewater is delivered into the drainage system without flowing over the floor.

Vent Stacks from Hoods

Vent stacks from covered cooking vats or hoods over cook tanks should be arranged or constructed so as to preclude drainage of condensate back into the vats.

X. REQUIREMENTS FOR EQUIPMENT IN GENERAL USE

Lavatories

Conveniently located hand washing facilities (lavatories) with a bowl size of about 12 by 16 by 6 inches should be provided for the employees and inspectors. Each lavatory must be supplied with:

- A. Hot and cold running water delivered through a combination mixing faucet with outlet about 12 inches above the rim of the bowl to facilitate washing arms as well as hands.
- B. Liquid soap and an ample supply of sanitary towels in suitable dispensers.
- C. A suitable receptacle for used towels.

Lavatories in workrooms should be pedal operated.

Lavatories should also be directly connected to the drainage system.

Drinking Fountains

Sanitary drinking fountains should be provided in large workrooms and in dressing rooms. If desired, they may be located at lavatories and arranged so the overflows discharge into the bowls of the lavatories. If this is done they should be placed sufficiently high above the bowls to avoid splash onto them when the lavatories are used.

Drinking fountains are particularly important in meat processing departments; otherwise employees may drink from any available cold water outlet. This could result in contaminating product and/or equipment surfaces with water from the employee's mouth and face.

Inedible Product Container

Fifty-gallon metal drums or plastic drums are acceptable for inedible materials. They must be kept clean inside and out, in good repair, and legibly marked "INEDIBLE" in letters at least 2 inches high.

Sterilizers

Sterilizers should be constructed of rust resistant metal (preferable stainless steel), and should be of sufficient size for complete immersion of knives, cleavers, saws, and other implements in hot water (minimum temperature 180° F). They should adjoin the lavatories in slaughtering departments and elsewhere as required.

Cutting and Boning Boards

Boards used on boning and cutting tables should be constructed of approved plastics and must be chamfered on all edges to prevent undue chipping.

Laminated wood butcher blocks and laminated wood cutting boards will be accepted only as long as they are smooth and free of cracks where meat juices and fat can accumulate.

The non-removable wood knife racks often seen attached to butcher blocks or walls are not acceptable. Racks should be made of metal and capable of being taken apart for cleaning.

XI. DRY STORAGE AREAS

Because there is a wide variety of supplies used in connection with meat production and packaging, such as dry product ingredients, packaging materials, and cleaning and maintenance items, good housekeeping and cleanliness in storerooms are essential to any sound sanitation program.

To facilitate cleaning and to avoid harboring places for insects, rodents and vermin, provisions should be made to store supplies on racks at least 12 inches above the floor with passageways maintained between rows of racks. Racks should be sufficiently spaced away from walls so the entire floor-wall junction is visible for detecting evidence of insect or rodent infestation. All openings that may admit rodents, birds, flies, and other pests should be effectively screened.

XII. SPECIAL SANITATION REQUIREMENTS AND PROBLEMS

General

The building, rooms, equipment and other physical facilities of the plant should be kept in good repair and be maintained in an orderly sanitary condition at all times. There should be no handling or storing of materials that create an objectionable condition in areas where product is prepared, stored or handled.

Unnecessary pipes, wires, string, and other material should be removed and no trash should be allowed to accumulate.

Scaling paint, dust, and flaking rust must be scraped from overhead structures in edible products departments. Condensation will not be permitted where it can contaminate product. Hot water for cleaning rooms and equipment (other than those requiring 180° F. water) must be delivered under pressure to sufficient convenient outlets and must be of such a temperature to accomplish a thorough cleanup.

When an inspector decides any equipment, utensil, room or compartment at an official establishment is unclean, a "Kansas Rejected" tag will be attached to it. Such tagged items, rooms or compartments shall not be used again until made acceptable and the tag removed by the inspector.

Sanitizing agents must not be used as a substitute for thorough and effective cleanup. Residues must be removed from edible product equipment by thorough rinsing with clean water before the equipment is again used for handling product.

However, residues of the compounds need not be washed from floors, walls, and ceilings unless in the judgment of the Inspector-in-charge, the presence of such residues is objectionable.

Supplies that might contact edible products must be handled and stored under sanitary conditions. Such supplies should be treated as "edible products" and adequate

measures taken to prevent dust collection, contamination from footwear or contact with any unsanitary surface.

Since the use of stiff wire brushes to clean metal equipment may result in scratching and injuring the equipment surface, the use of nylon or similar bristled brushes are recommended. Fine wire brushes or steel wool may contaminate product with metal particles, so they must not be used on product, or equipment that will come in contact with product.

Processing (General)

Facilities for holding perishable product under refrigeration must be provided. For proper care of product and to facilitate control of molds and bacteria, operations such as beef cutting, boning and trimming, bacon slicing, pork cutting, frozen steak preparation, sausage chopping and mixing, etc., should be conducted in departments having a temperature not higher than 50° F.

Such operations must be located in rooms separate from carcass or product holding coolers to avoid contamination of product by clean-up water or condensation during the clean-up time.

Unprotected light bulbs should not be suspended directly over choppers, grinders, mixers, and similar equipment. Burned out light bulbs should be placed in rubbish containers immediately on removal from the electric fixture.

Special care should be taken in the disposal of fluorescent tubes that may contain a poisonous gas. Such tube should not be broken in an edible products department of the establishment.

Milk, beverage, and other glass bottles should not be permitted in processing departments. Broken or cracked windowpanes should be repaired promptly. No fixtures or appliances, such as tables, trays, tanks, vats, machines, implements, cans, or containers of any kind, should be used unless they are of such materials and construction so as not to contaminate the product. They should also be clean and sanitary.

In some establishments, equipment such as grinders, choppers, mixers, etc., are used interchangeably in the handling of pork that possibly contains live trichinae. Trichinae control must be exercised in all processing plants under State Department of Agriculture inspection.

Sawdust shall not be used on benches or equipment or on floors in areas where operations such as grinding, boning, or cutting are being done.

The feeder screw of most meat grinders is cast, and the center consists of a hollow core. It is very important that close examination be made of such equipment to detect any crack, flaw, or faulty construction that would result in an unsanitary condition. The hollow arm in some band saws contains a small opening on the top side. This opening allows cleanup water and other contaminants to enter the saw arm and become sour and decomposed. The problem can be corrected by placing a clean-out opening or plug on the lower side of the arm.

Grinders, saws, cutting tables, etc. shall be thoroughly cleaned after each days production.

Coolers, Boning and Cutting

Cooler rails must be placed at least 2 feet from refrigerating equipment, walls, columns, and other fixed parts of the building. To promote cleanliness of product and to protect walls from damage by carcass shanks, it is desirable to place rails (especially header or traffic rails) at least 3 feet from the walls.

Sausage

Sausage grinder plates of the so-called reversible type are constructed with removable bushings and sleeves. This permits the accumulation of a considerable amount of meat, fat, and meat juices on the inner surfaces of the various de-mountable parts during grinding operations. The parts must be completely demounted for cleaning daily.

XIII. PLANT PERSONNEL

Clean personnel with clean habits are essential to sanitary production of meat and meat food products. Clean hands, clean clothing and hygienic practices reduce the likelihood of contaminating product and the product-contact surfaces of equipment, utensils and packaging materials.

Disease Control

Disease transmitted through meat food products frequently originates from an infected meat handler. Food handlers to other employees and consumers through contaminated meat food products and careless handling practices may transmit a wide range of communicable diseases and infections.

It is the responsibility of operators of official establishments to see that no person affected with a disease in a communicable form, while a carrier of such disease, or while afflicted with boils, sores, infected wounds, or other abnormal sources of contaminating microorganisms, works in any area of the establishment where there is

likelihood of disease transmission or of meat or meat food ingredients becoming contaminated.

Boils, infected cuts and sore throats are sources of organisms that cause staphylococcal food intoxication, one of the most frequently reported type of foodborne illness in the United States.

Clothing and Personal Equipment

All personnel handling meat, ingredients, or their contact surfaces must wear clean washable outer garments. Street clothing should not be worn while on duty since it can serve as a source of contamination. If street clothing is worn while on duty it must be covered by a clean frock or apron.

It is required that all workers change clothing daily. In those jobs where there is routine contact of product with clothing (luggers, etc.), more frequent changing may be necessary.

All employees working in departments where exposed product is handled must wear caps, hats, hairnets, or other effective hair restraints to prevent hair from falling into the product.

Wearing of loose jewelry should be avoided. Workers are to remove all jewelry that might serve as a source of product contamination during work periods in which foods or components are manipulated by hand.

Wearing of badges, identification cards, campaign buttons, and similar articles of outer clothing by persons who handle products should be discouraged. However, similar articles necessarily worn must be attached so that their accidental inclusion in product is definitely precluded.

Boners aprons, wrist guards, and the like used as safety devices for employees engaged in slaughter, cutting or boning operations must be of impervious construction and maintained in a clean and sanitary manner.

To assist in maintaining leather boners aprons in satisfactory condition, a clean, washable cloth covering should be worn over the apron. Use of boners aprons made of plastic is preferred and encouraged. The cloth covering may then be omitted. Employees are required to remove all aprons, knives, hooks, and other hand tools before entering toilet rooms.

Cotton gloves frequently worn by boners, luggers, and others may pose contamination problems. Such gloves can be used only in those operations involving inspected and passed products.

In order to assure thorough cleaning, all such gloves are to be laundered in a commercial or establishment laundry. Workers using cotton gloves must begin each workday with a clean pair and make periodic changes throughout the day as necessary. At no time should such use exceed four hours per pair (changing is necessitated due to the accumulation of moisture and contaminants, coupled with the worker's body temperature that can lead to a rapid buildup of microorganisms).

Various meat handlers commonly wear other types of rubber or plastic gloves. Whatever the type of gloves being used, they should be a light color (not black) so that a ready evaluation of cleanliness and condition may be made. Replacement of such gloves is necessary whenever peeling or other deterioration is observed.

Footwear should be appropriate to the operation and, in most instances, be of water proof construction or treated to repel water. Since footwear can be a source of transporting contamination, care should be taken to see that all personnel effectively clean their shoes or boots periodically. This is particularly important when one enters an area less contaminated than the one they are leaving, such as an employee going from the kill floor to boning cooler.

Knife scabbards, belts, steels, knives, hooks and other hand implements are to be constructed so that they can be easily kept clean. All such equipment must be kept reasonably clean during operations and must be completely cleaned at the end of operations.

Cleanliness

The employees of the establishment who handle any product should keep their hands clean. Employees should wash their hands before handling any product or implements used in the preparation of product after visiting the toilet rooms, and at other times when the hands have become soiled or contaminated.

Hands often become soiled in the performance of routine duties in and about the establishment so the convenient location of hand washing facilities is essential.

Fingernails are not to be polished and must be kept clean and neatly trimmed. Necessary care should be taken by each employee to prevent contamination of product with substances such as perspiration, hair, cosmetics, tobacco, chemicals and medicants.

Employees should not use tobacco in any form while engaged in food handling or while in equipment and utensil washing or food handling areas. Designated locations in such areas may be approved for smoking provided no contamination hazards result.

Spitting on the floor is prohibited. Employees must learn to control their hands and avoid unsanitary and unsightly personal practices such as scratching the head, placing the fingers in or about the mouth or nose, or indiscriminate and uncovered sneezing or coughing which is likely to result in contamination of food. The mouth must not be used to temporarily hold tags, pins, cards, or other objects that will subsequently be handled by the employee, or directly or indirectly contact product.

The plant management has the responsibility to give establishment employees the appropriate training in proper food handling techniques and food protection principles and shall be cognizant of the danger of poor personal hygiene and unsanitary practices.

Labeling Overview

It is the responsibility of the Meat and Poultry Inspection program to assure the consuming public that all products are properly packaged, identified, and are not misleading or deceptive with respect to content, ingredients, marking, labeling, and packaging. It is normal for consumers to expect that any product bearing the mark of inspection is from healthy animals; is free from adulteration; and is clean, wholesome, and truthfully labeled.

Label Responsibilities

Each inspected establishment has the responsibility to produce products that are properly packaged and identified and are not misleading or deceptive in content, ingredients, marking, labeling or packaging. Establishments should work in conjunction with the Inspector-in-charge (IIC) to accurately submit a label sketch for approval. Care should be taken to ensure that the printing, colors and materials do not cause any adulteration of product or give a false impression.

Producers or individuals wanting to direct market products have two labeling options. First they may work with an establishment and the IIC to create a *private label*. This would be a label that would identify the product, producer, and establishment. These labels may be owned by the individual or producer, but must be kept secured by the establishment and applied under inspection. The second option is to use the existing labels already approved for the establishment that is producing their product.

Labeling Terms

An *official mark* is the inspection or any symbol prescribed in the regulations to identify the status of the product.

A *label* is a display of written, printed, or graphic matter upon the immediate container (not including package liners) of any article. The official mark of inspection (the inspection legend) is required and is one of the required features that must appear on the label.

Labeling means all labels and other written, printed, or graphic matter (1) upon any article or any of its containers or wrappers, or (2) accompanying such articles. Official marks and other markings are considered labeling.

Principal display panel is that part of the label most likely to be displayed, presented, shown, or examined under customary conditions of display for sale.

Sketch. A sketch indicates the proposed setup, wording and required information of the labeling. Sketches may be hand-drawn, computer generated, or any other reasonable facsimiles that clearly reflect and project the final version of the labeling.

Final. Once a sketch has been approved, the establishment has the authority to print a final copy of the label. This final copy is then submitted, providing it matches the sketch, and will be approved for use on the intended product.

Required Features of a Label

Name of product. If a product claims to be or is represented as a product for which a definition and standard of identity or composition exists, it shall be the name of the product specified in the standard, for example, ground beef or frankfurters. If no standard exists, the product name shall be the common or usual name of the food. Product names must be on the principal display panel.

Ingredients statement. If a product is fabricated from two or more ingredients, the word “ingredients” shall be followed by the common or usual names of the ingredients and arranged in descending order of predominance according to the amounts used in product preparation. The ingredient statement must be located on the principal display panel.

Inspection legend and establishment number. Labels of all products produced under inspection and packaged for sale shall show an official inspection legend and the establishment number of the plant in which it was produced. It may be of any size, provided that it is of sufficient size and of such color as to be conspicuously displayed and readily legible. The legend must be located on the principal display panel.

Handling statement. When packaged product requires any special handling to maintain their wholesomeness, they shall have prominently displayed, on the principal panel, a

statement such as: Keep Refrigerated, Keep Frozen, Previously Handled Frozen For Your Protection, Refreeze or Keep Refrigerated.

Safe handling instructions. All raw meat and poultry products shall have safe handling instructions prominently placed on the label. The safe handling instructions may be located anywhere on the outside of an immediate container.

Net weight statement. The statement of net quantity of contents shall appear on the principal display panel in a conspicuous and easily legible bold face or type. It will not be misleading or false and will express an accurate statement of the quantity of the contents exclusive of wrappers and packing materials. The term “Net Weight” or “Net Wt.” refers to contents in terms of weight. “Net Content” refers to fluid measure.

Signature line. The name and place of business of the manufacturer, packer, or distributor for whom the product is prepared shall appear in the required place on the label. This may be shown as “prepared for” or “distributed by.” The place of business shall be shown on the label by city, state, and zip code when the business is listed in a telephone or city directory. If not listed in such a directory, the place of business shall also include the street address. The signature line must be located on the principal display panel.

Organic and Natural Labeling

Labeling for meat and poultry products bearing claims of “certified organic by” or “natural” must be evaluated by labeling authorities in the inspection program prior to its use. Labeling includes any written, printed, or graphic material which is used on the containers or wrapping of meat and poultry products, or that accompanies meat and poultry products at their point of sale.

The term “certified organic by” is to be followed by the name of the certifying entity, and the entire statement may appear anywhere on the label. All words in the claim are to be contiguous and of the same size, style, and color.

Labeling for “certified organic by (certifying entity)” submitted for prior approval is to be accompanied by certification documentation that is to be provided to the meat and poultry producer by the certifying entity. The necessary documentation includes (1) the name of the meat and poultry product, and/or ingredients used, (2) the certifying entity’s name and address, (3) the name and signature of the responsible official at the certifying entity, (4) the date of the certification, and (5) the acknowledgment that the entity (a) has applied criteria in certifying the product and (b) employs a system for evaluating ongoing compliance with its criteria.

The term “natural” may be used along with “animal production claims,” as long as they are truthful statements about how the animals from which meat and poultry products are derived or raised. Examples of animal production claims are “No Hormone Implants Used in Raising,” “Raised Without Added Hormones,” “No Antibiotics Used in Raising,” “Corn Fed,” “Fed An All Vegetable Diet,” “Raised In An Open Pasture,” and “Free Range.” These statements will be evaluated on the supporting documentation, to ensure the accuracy of the animal production claims, such as producer affidavits and raising protocols.

The term “natural” may be used when products contain no artificial ingredients and are no more than minimally processed.

REGISTRATION OVERVIEW

As stated in the Kansas Meat and Poultry Inspection Act, no person shall engage in business, in or for intrastate commerce, as a meat broker or animal food manufacturer, engage in business in such commerce as a wholesaler of any carcasses, or the parts or products of the carcasses, of any livestock, domestic rabbits or poultry, whether intended for human food or other purposes, or engage in business as a public warehouseman storing any such articles in or for such commerce, without first having registered with the Kansas Secretary of Agriculture. Furthermore, no person shall engage in business or operate a packing house, sausage plant, poultry packing plant, slaughterhouse or poultry dressing plant without registering such person’s name and place of business with the secretary, and paying the appropriate registration fee. The registrations expire on December 31st of each year, and must be renewed by January 15 of the following year to avoid reinstatement fees.

BUSINESS CLASSIFICATIONS

Broker: A broker buys and sells products without, in most cases, physically taking possession of the article. An example of a broker transaction would be as follows: the broker calls the marketing division of a slaughter facility and purchases 500 pounds of prime beef loin. He then calls his customers and tells them that he has so many pounds of beef loin at so much a pound. If the customer makes a purchase, the broker has the beef loin delivered to the customer without handling the product. Current registration fee for this classification is \$50.00 per year.

Wholesaler: The wholesaler is the distribution level between the manufacturer and the retailer. A wholesale operation differs from a broker transaction in that the wholesaler purchases and takes possession of a product from the manufacturer, makes the sale,

and delivers directly to the retail outlet. A wholesaler does not sell to the ultimate customer; a wholesaler is a middleman who sells to a retailer. The wholesaler deals with case lots, or consumer-ready packages, and does not further process the product. There currently is no registration fee for this classification.

Distributor: A distributor would be able to take a variety of completely labeled and packaged consumer-ready meat cuts and assemble a variety meat bundle. The distributor can make sales directly to the consumer. Registering as a distributor would be one option for persons wishing to direct market meat and poultry products of their own raising. The product would have to be slaughtered and processed with the benefit of inspection at either a state or federal facility. There currently is no registration fee for this classification.

Animal Food Manufacturer: The animal food manufacturer is any person engaged in the business of manufacturing and/or processing animal food derived wholly or in part from carcasses, or parts or products of the carcasses, of livestock, domestic rabbits, or poultry. The fee for the animal food manufacturer is currently \$50.00 per year.

SLAUGHTERING AND PROCESSING FACILITIES

There are multiple classifications used for the registration of slaughter and processing facilities. The facility requirements for all the classifications are similar with only a small difference in the required registration fee.

- **Small/Seasonal Slaughter Facility:** A small/seasonal is a facility that operates in conjunction with a seasonal supply and/or demand for a product. A small/seasonal facility operates no more than 30 working days per year. There is a \$50.00 per year registration fee currently assessed for this type of operation.
- **Facilities slaughtering and/or processing less than 300 animal units per calendar year.** Animal units are computed by using one unit for each bovine, bison, horse or other equine, 0.6 units for each swine, 0.4 units for each sheep or goat, and as specified by rule and regulation for other animal units. The annual registration fee is currently \$150.00 per year.
- **Custom Slaughter and/or Processing Facilities:** These are facilities that slaughter livestock and/or poultry for the owners of the animals. The products derived from animals slaughtered and processed in a Custom facility are not allowed to enter into inter or intrastate commerce, and are for use only by the owner of the animal, his immediate family, members of his household, employees, or non-paying guests. Current registration fee is \$200.00 per year.

- Inspected Facility Slaughtering more than 300 animal units per year: This category is self-explanatory for the most part. Facilities operating under this classification would be involved in the slaughter process and would market animal carcasses. A \$250.00 yearly registration fee is currently required.
- Inspected Processing Facility: Operations of this type purchase inspected products and further process the raw products into various finished products. There are no inspected slaughter operations conducted at these facilities. The current registration fee is \$250.00 per year.
- Inspected Slaughtering and Processing: These operations that conduct inspected slaughter and processing. Operations of this type often purchase additional inspected products to further process in addition to processing the animal carcasses yielded by the slaughter operations conducted at the facility. The current registration fee for this classification is \$250.00 per year.

The registration of meat and poultry businesses is handled by the Records Center of the Kansas Department of Agriculture. For additional information on registration please phone the Records Center. Their telephone number is (785) 296-5192.